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ABSTRACT

Project SEARCH (also titled "A Model for Providing Vocational Counseling Services to Adult Basic Education Students) investigated methods of providing counseling services with basic education programs while serving as a model counseling program. Designed to increase adult basic education (ABE) students' self-awareness, decision-making and goal-setting skills, knowledge and use of community resources, and job-seeking skills, Project SEARCH provided individual counseling services to 33 students and group counseling to 12 students. Because the emphasis of the project was on the counseling process rather than on counseling tools, only one counseling tool was purchased for the project--the Self-Directed Search. Other tools used were simple paper and pencil exercises. Included among these project-developed tools were a needs assessment, a goal-attainment profile, a student/counselor contact sheet, and a client/counselor agreement. Counseling sessions focused on skills identification, values clarification, communication skills, the relationship of personality characteristics to the career decision-making process, and improving job search skills. From an analysis of student evaluations, pre-post-counseling tests, and retention/separation data, project staff found that approximately 75 percent of those involved made significant progress. (Appended to the report are the above-mentioned counseling tools.) (MN)

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FINAL REPORT

of

A MODEL FOR PROVIDING VOCATIONAL COUNSELING SERVICES
TO ADULT BASIC EDUCATION STUDENTS

FY-81-8084-P

a special demonstration project
funded by a grant from the
Indiana Department of Public Instruction
Division of Adult and Community Education
under Section 310 of the Adult Education Act, P. L. 91-230 as amended

Indiana Vocational Technical College-Central Indiana, Grantee
Sue Miller-Villegas, Project Director

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Indiana Vocational Technical College-Central Indiana Institute, Grantee

Sue Miller-Villegas, Project Director
Rita L. Brotherton, Project Counselor

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ABSTRACT

This special demonstration 310 project addressed the vocational counseling needs of adult basic education students as identified by the Indiana State Department of Public Instruction.

The goal of this project was to investigate methods of providing counseling services within basic education programs while serving as a model counseling program.

"A Model for Providing Vocational Counseling Services to Adult Basic Education Students", or Project SEARCH, provided and evaluated two methods of counseling, individual and group counseling. The impact of counseling on the students, teachers, and ABE programs was studied.

Project SEARCH results indicate that counseling services, both individual and group, increased student effectiveness in the areas of: 1) self-awareness (interests, skills, values), 2) decision-making and goal-setting skills, 3) knowledge and use of community resources, and 4) job-seeking skills.

Counseling services also had a positive impact on teacher effectiveness. The provision of the service enabled the teachers to spend more time teaching as well as increasing their awareness of the needs assessment and referral process.

In addition to counseling having a positive impact on student and teacher effectiveness, counseling also had a positive effect on the retention rates of the basic education programs. Those students participating in Project SEARCH met their personal objectives or continued in the basic education program at a higher rate than those not involved in counseling.

Project SEARCH results suggest a cooperative effort between adult educators and counselors will maximize the overall growth and development of the adult learner.

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. Goals and Activities

The Adult Education Act has been designed to "expand opportunities and establish programs which will enable adults to acquire the means to secure training to become more employable, productive, and responsible citizens." In order to meet the intent of the Act and the needs of the adult student, "A Model for Providing Vocational Counseling Services to Adult Basic Education Students" was conducted by Indiana Vocational Technical College-Central Indiana Institute (Indianapolis Region 8) during the 1981 fiscal year. The specific needs of the adults being addressed were: 1) vocational counseling services to aid in establishing and maintaining realistic goals and expectations, 2) educational and training information, 3) job seeking skills, 4) method of handling "fear of failure" syndrome.

The goals of this project were to:

- Investigate methods of providing counseling services within adult basic education programs and report the impact of counseling on the students, teaching staff, and program.
- Serve as a model counseling program for adult basic education programs.

"A Model for Providing Vocational Counseling Services to Adult Basic Education Students" had two components. The first component was service-oriented in that the project would provide vocational counseling and vocational and career-related information to adult basic education students at two basic education sites. Individual counseling would be offered at the first site and group counseling would be offered at the second site. The second component of the project was research-oriented. Each counseling method would be evaluated in terms of meeting the students' objectives and a comparison of the two methods of counseling

would be made resulting in a recommendation for the optimum method of providing the vocational counseling service.

Finally, the legal, logistical, and programmatic issues involved with providing this service would be reported and the impact this counseling service has had on the retention of priority students would be documented.

B. Project Objectives

Objective One

Upon successful completion of this project, the adult basic education students participating in all phases of the counseling process will demonstrate measureable achievements in the following areas:

- identification of skills, vocational interests, personal and occupational values, and ability to relate these to the career decision-making process.
- effectively use the career decision-making process in establishing short and long-term career goals.
- locate and utilize community services, i.e., those providing vocational/educational training, vocational information, and counseling services.
- write a resume', fill out a job application, and participate in a job interview.

Objective Two

At the conclusion of this project the following information will be reported:

- recommendation for the optimum method of providing a counseling service.
- impact counseling has had on retention/separation rates

Objective Three

As a result of this project a report will be made of the legal, logistical, and programmatic issues involved in providing vocational counseling services to adults enrolled in basic education programs.

II. DESIGN

A. Description of Counseling Sites

Two adult basic education programs were chosen as sites for this project on the basis of size, class schedules, student population and staff interest in counseling services. Both the individual counseling program (site A) and the group counseling program (site B) are open four to four and one-half days per week as well as evenings. In addition, both sites employ a full-time teacher and paraprofessional for the class of students who participated in this counseling research project.

B. Target Population

The counseling services would be available to all adult students who were sixteen years or older, out of school, with less than a high school diploma or equivalent functional level. Priority would be given to those adults with the greatest basic educational needs which has been defined as those functioning at the 0-8 grade level.

At the individual counseling site, it had been estimated that the counseling service would be offered to 40-80 students over a period of nine months. At the group counseling site, it had been projected that 25-45 students would participate in three workshops scheduled the first three quarters of the project year.

C. Staff

A full-time project director, full-time project counselor, and part-time (25%) secretary staffed Project SEARCH.

Project Director - The director was responsible for the overall development, implementation, and administration of the project. The director had a Master's Degree in Counseling and had previous experience

counseling minimally educated adults, administering special projects, and skills in counseling program design, implementation, and evaluation.

Project Counselor - The counselor was responsible for providing individual counseling services to the target population at Site A, administering pre- and post-counseling tests, collecting data, and coordinating educational and vocational services with the ABE staff. At site B, the project counselor was responsible for developing and co-facilitating three career workshops.

The counselor had a Specialist Degree in counseling, prior experience working with minimally educated adults and vocational and personal counseling work experience. This individual had been trained in counseling theories, counseling techniques, psychology of human growth, group dynamics and communication skills.

Secretary - The part-time secretary was responsible for clerical activities related to the project including typing all quarterly and final reports.

ABE Staff - Director - Prior to the implementation of the counseling program, the Project Director met with the ABE Directors at both counseling sites. At these meetings, the directors agreed:

1. to provide data about retention/separation rates
2. to provide data about students (e.g. age, sex, race, etc.)
3. to recruit students for involvement in counseling
4. to allow the counselor to use classtime for counseling
5. to provide facilities for counseling

Teachers - The teacher's role in the students' education was defined by the school for which he/she was employed. In general, the teachers at both counseling sites were responsible for developing and implementing

individual educational plans in cooperation with the students. The teachers' primary responsibilities in Project Search were recruitment of students for involvement in counseling and sharing of information with the counselor regarding students' vocational, emotional, and academic growth. The teachers also assisted Project SEARCH staff by administering counseling evaluations and providing data about the students.

D. Counseling Activities

This section will briefly describe the following activities associated with this project:

1. Recruitment
2. Orientation
3. Test Administration
4. Needs Assessment
5. Referrals

Recruitment

Prior to the counseling program, the Search project director and counselor met with the teaching and administrative staff and explained the counseling service and the goals and objectives of the project. The staff agreed to cooperate by taking an active role in identifying students who might be interested in counseling.

In terms of process, a pre-counseling questionnaire which would indicate if the student was interested in or had a need for counseling services was administered by the teacher at the individual counseling site. If the student was interested in the counseling program, he/she would be introduced to the counselor and have an opportunity to schedule an appointment. At the group counseling site, a poster announcing the upcoming workshop was placed in the classroom. Those

students interested in the workshop were introduced to the project counselor or director by the teacher. In addition, the counselor and the program director explained the counseling services to the students in the classroom at both sites on several occasions.

The overall philosophy maintained in the individual counseling sessions was one of treating adults as adults. It was assumed that because this was an adult education program each student had been allowed to make a conscious decision to attend, therefore he/she would be allowed that same decision in terms of becoming involved in the counseling program, Project Search.

Orientation

The project counselor developed an orientation session targeted specifically toward basic education students interested in counseling. The orientation session consisted of four areas: 1) initial determination of students' goals, 2) explanation of SEARCH project objectives, 3) discussion and provision of a Community Resource Handbook, and 4) discussion of student's decision to participate or not to participate in counseling. Those students making a decision to participate were scheduled for another appointment (site A) or scheduled for the upcoming workshop (site B). The project counselor was responsible for orientation at site A, the individual counseling site, and the project director was responsible for this activity at site B, the group counseling site.

Test Administration

A pre-counseling test was administered to those students at site A and B who had made a decision to participate in counseling. This test was administered by the counselor or teacher. The test, developed by New Educational Directions (see Appendix A), was designed to

measure: 1) work-related attitudes, 2) locus of control, 3) job-seeking skills, 4) self-esteem, 5) career decision-making, and 6) attitude toward learning.

A post-counseling test (identical to the pre-test) was administered immediately upon termination of counseling services. In addition, another evaluation tool was also administered at this time (see III-Results).

Needs Assessment

Using a structured interview format, the counselor obtained the following information from the student:

- work experience
- information about skills
- school experience
- past learning blocks/disabilities
- favorite subjects
- medical information; mental/physical health
- attitude toward learning
- marital or family problems
- goals for the educational program
- goals for the counseling program
- need for referral to community agencies

During the interviewing process the counselor helped the students become aware of any blocks they might have toward learning, finding and/or keeping jobs. In addition, goals for counseling were established by the counselor and students based upon the assessed needs.

Referrals

Referrals were made to community service agencies in situations where students were having family crises, marital conflicts, pregnancy problems and/or extreme emotional/psychological problems. Some required more in-depth counseling and/or had different needs than the focus of the program. Others were identified by the classroom teacher as disruptive or behavior problems and were referred by the counselor for appropriate attention and help. Therefore, the project counselor made referrals to mental health agencies, government funded training programs or specialized occupational counseling centers.

E. Counseling Tools

The counseling tools developed and selected for Project SEARCH were utilized in individual counseling sessions as well as group counseling workshops. Efforts were made to keep the reading level appropriate for the target population. The staff felt the interaction between the student and counselor was more valuable and significant than the counseling tools; therefore, emphasis was placed on the counseling process and technique rather than the tools themselves. Only one counseling tool was purchased for the project (Self-Directed Search), the other tools were simple paper and pencil exercises, developed specifically to meet student needs.

A skills identification exercise was used in conjunction with the needs assessment previously discussed. This tool helped the students begin to identify their skills and interests and become more aware of themselves in general. For those who needed more guidance, oftentimes an interest checklist, the Self-Directed Search was administered.

Subsequent sessions focused on values clarification, communication skills, personality characteristics (e.g. assertiveness) and their relationship to the career decision-making process. Other tools used in counseling sessions included a "Fantasy Job" cassette tape, checklists and handouts. In addition, the counselor assisted the students in identifying career goals, and making decisions through the use of a "Goal Attainment" scale and occupational information reference books, pamphlets supplied by community resources, training programs, and the employment office.

Lastly, the counselor assisted the students in improving their job-seeking skills through the use of handouts concerning job-seeking techniques, mock job interviews, resumé preparation, and practice job applications. Examples of counseling tools can be found in Appendix B.

F. Evaluation

Three evaluation methods were used to measure the impact of counseling services. These were: 1) analysis of data obtained from a student evaluation of the counseling service, 2) analysis of pre-post counseling test data, and 3) analysis of retention/separation data (see III Results). The project counselor and ABE teachers were responsible for administering the pre-post test and student evaluation. The project counselor was also responsible for collecting the retention/separation data while the project director analyzed these data.

III. RESULTS

This section presents client demographics, evaluation results, and a discussion of the group and individual counseling services.

A. Client Demographics

At Site A, the individual counseling site, 33 students participated in the counseling service. At Site B, the group counseling site, 12 students participated in the counseling service. The following table (page 11) represents the characteristics of those students participating in the counseling services at each of the sites.

Client characteristics were very similar between Site A and Site B. The majority of students who participated in the project were between the ages of 18 and 39. At Site A, there were almost three times as many females as males; whereas, at Site B, there were an equal number of each sex. An average of 90% of the students at both sites were caucasian. The majority of students at Site A and Site B reported they had completed between 9 and 12 years of school, with 20% of the students at Site B having already graduated from high school, but functioning at the 0-8 grade level. In addition, an average of 95% of the students at both counseling sites were tested by the ABE staff upon entry into the program and found to be functioning at the 0-8 grade level. In the category of employment status, it was found that approximately two-thirds of the students participating in Project SEARCH at both sites were unemployed.

Table I
CLIENT CHARACTERISTICS

Individual Counseling Site A 33 Cases		Group Counseling Site B 12 Cases	
AGE:			
12%	17 and under	25%	
45%	18 - 29	25%	
24%	30 - 39	33%	
18%	40 - 49	17%	
0%	50 and over	0%	
SEX:			
27%	Male	50%	
73%	Female	50%	
RACE:			
12%	Black	0%	
88%	Caucasian	92%	
0%	Other (Vietnamese)	8%	
FORMAL YEARS OF EDUCATION IN REGULAR SCHOOL SYSTEM:			
0%	0 - 4	0%	
21%	5 - 8	17%	
79%	9 - 12 (not a high school graduate)	67%	
0%	High School Graduate	17%	
PRESENT EDUCATIONAL LEVEL:			
39%	Level I, Phase I (0-4, Functional Grade Level)	50%	
58%	Level I, Phase 2 (5-8, Functional Grade Level)	42%	
3%	Level II (9th Grade & Higher)	8%	
PRESENT EMPLOYMENT STATUS:			
70%	Unemployed	67%	
30%	Employed	33%	

B. Evaluation Data

Student Evaluation of Counseling Service

An evaluation tool (Appendix A) was developed by the project staff to measure the impact of counseling services in terms of: 1) skill awareness, 2) goal setting, 3) decision-making, 4) knowledge of community resources, 5) job-seeking skills, and 6) the value of counseling. The students were asked by the project counselor to anonymously complete this evaluation immediately upon termination of counseling services. Of the 33 students involved in individual counseling at Site A, 36% (12) completed the evaluation. At Site B, the group counseling site, 75% (9) of the 12 students involved in counseling completed the questionnaire.

Discussion

An average of 75% of the students who completed this evaluation and who were involved in individual counseling indicated they made progress in the areas of 1) skill awareness, 2) goal establishment, 3) decision-making, 4) community resources, and 5) job-seeking skills. An average of 76% of those completing the evaluation who were involved in group counseling indicated they made progress in each of these areas as well. In addition, 100% of the students at both sites felt the counseling was "somewhat helpful" to "very valuable", with a higher percentage at the "very valuable" end of the scale (Question 6). At both counseling sites, the students felt they made greater progress in becoming aware of their skills (Question 1) and improving their job-seeking skills (Question 5) through the aid of counseling than in other areas. Slightly more

than half of the students at the group counseling site felt they had improved their ability to locate and use community services (Question 4) and half of those involved in individual counseling indicated they had increased their skills in making decisions.

In the comment section, the students indicated counseling had been helpful to them by increasing skill awareness, setting goals, understanding oneself, and offering the students an opportunity to discuss their problems.

TABLE 2

STUDENT EVALUATION OF COUNSELING SERVICE

1a. Before participating in vocational counseling, did you feel you were aware of your skills?					% of students indicating a positive change 92% Individual Counseling 89% Group Counseling
Ind. Coun.	(25%)	(17%)	(50%)	(8%)	
Group "	5	4	3	2	
	no, not at all (11%)		somewhat (67%)	yes, very aware (11%)	
1b. As a result of counseling, do you feel you are aware of your skills now?					
Ind.	(33%)	(42%)	(25%)		
Group	5	4	3	2	
	no, not at all (11%)		somewhat (71%)	yes, very aware (33%)	
2a. Had you set any short- or long-term career goals before entering counseling?					75% Individual Counseling 67% Group Counseling
Ind.	(33%)	(58%)	(8%)		
Group	5	4	3	2	
	no, not at all (44%)		had begun to plan & set career goals (33%)	yes, have set goals (22%)	
2b. As a result of counseling, have you set any short- or long-term career goals?					
Ind.	(42%)	(17%)	(42%)		
Group	5	4	3	2	
	no, not at all (11%)		have begun to plan & set career goals (22%)	yes, have set goals (44%)	
3a. Before counseling, were you aware of how to make decisions?					50% Individual Counseling 78% Group Counseling
Ind.	(8%)	(8%)	(25%)	(17%)	
Group	5	4	3	2	
	no, not at all (11%)		somewhat (22%)	yes, very aware (44%)	
3b. As a result of counseling, do you feel you are now aware of how to make decisions?					
Ind.	(17%)	(25%)	(58%)		
Group	5	4	3	2	
	no, not at all (22%)		somewhat (33%)	yes, very aware (44%)	
4a. Before entering counseling, were you able to locate and use community agencies?					75% Individual Counseling 56% Group Counseling
Ind.	(33%)	(8%)	(50%)	(8%)	
Group	5	4	3	2	
	no, not at all (22%)		could locate some agencies (11%)	yes, could locate and use agencies (22%)	
4b. As a result of counseling, are you now able to locate and use community agencies?					
Ind.	(8%)	(33%)	(33%)	(25%)	
Group	5	4	3	2	
	no, not at all (22%)		could locate some agencies (11%)	yes, could locate and use agencies (67%)	

		5a. Before counseling, did you feel your job seeking skills were adequate?				
		(42%)	(17%)	(33%)	(8%)	
Ind.		5	4	3	2	1
Group		no, not at all	(22%)	somewhat adequate	(67%)	yes, very adequate
				(17%)		
		5b. As a result of counseling, do you feel your job seeking skills are now adequate?				
		(33%)	(58%)	(8%)		
Ind.		5	4	3	2	1
Group		no, not at all		somewhat adequate	(22%)	yes, very adequate
				(22%)		(56%)
		6. How would you rate the value of this vocational counseling experience?				
		(53%)	(67%)			
Ind.		5	4	3	2	1
Group		failed to meet		somewhat helpful		very valuable to me
		my needs		(17%)	(11%)	(78%)

83% Individual Counseling
89% Group Counseling

We are interested in improving this counseling service in order that it will meet more of your needs. Please feel free to make any comments you have about your counseling experience. For example, what did you like the most (or least) about being involved in counseling?

Comments?

1. "It has helped me understand myself better and feel better...I don't think I would have got through it if it hadn't been for counseling."
2. "I like talking and finding out about my skills I had never known were skills."
3. "What I liked most was being able to talk out my problems."
4. "The counseling made me aware of my job skills and how to use them to find a job."
5. "It has helped me to make long-range goals for myself, goals that I never thought were possible."

Pre-, Post-Counseling Test

This test, developed by New Educational Directions (see Appendix A), was designed to measure the impact of counseling services in the following six areas: 1) work attitudes, 2) locus of control, 3) job-seeking skills, 4) self-esteem, 5) decision-making skills, and 6) attitude toward learning.

This test was administered by the project counselor and teachers at both counseling sites. The pre-test was administered to those students who had expressed an interest in participating in the counseling project at both sites. The post-test was administered upon completion of the counseling services.

At the individual counseling site (Site A), 30% (10) of the 33 students who were involved in counseling completed both the pre- and post-test. At the group counseling site (Site B), 67% (8) of the 12 students involved in counseling completed the pre- and post-test. The project staff believes the small numbers completing this test was due to the fact that once the student had met his/her personal objective or had made the decision to separate, the student no longer felt the need to return to the counselor's office to complete the post-counseling test. In addition, this was a fairly lengthy test which required from 15 to 30 minutes of the student's time to complete.

Pattern Analysis

The following table presents mean increases/decreases between Pre-Counseling Test scores and Post-Counseling Test scores at Site A (Individual Counseling), and Site B (Group Counseling) in each of the six scales.

TABLE 3

	<u>Site A</u> <u>Individual Counseling</u>	<u>Site B</u> <u>Group Counseling</u>
Work Attitudes	- .5	4.5
Locus of Control	- .3	3.8
Job-Seeking Skills	2.4	4.1
Self-Esteem	1.8	5.1
Decision-Making	- .2	13.6
Attitude Towards Learning	3.9	.5

Because the test sample was small, a statistical analysis of the data was not performed. A study of the data for patterns was completed, and the following was noted: The students involved in individual counseling (Site A) made progress in three out of six areas and negligible losses in three areas. The students involved in group counseling made gains in each of the six areas. Students at both sites made gains in Job-Seeking Skills, Self-Esteem, and Attitude Towards Learning. Because of the small sample, it is not feasible to determine which method of counseling was the most effective; however, it can be concluded that students involved in counseling made progress in the majority of areas evaluated.

Retention/Separation Data

The following table represents enrollment and retention data for the site of individual counseling, Site A, and the site of group counseling, Site B.

TABLE 4

	Number Enrolled	Number Positive Termination	Number Negative Termination
No Counseling, Site A	68	21 (30.9%)	47 (69.1%)
Counseling, Individual	33	30 (91.0%)	3 (9.0%)
No Counseling, Site B	330	189 (57.2%)	141 (42.7%)
Counseling, Group	12	10 (83.4%)	2 (16.6%)

Students having attended class a minimum of 12 hours were considered enrolled. Those students who left the program because they had met their personal objectives were included in the positive termination category and those who separated before meeting their objectives were included in the negative termination category. In addition, those students who were continuing in the ABE program at the completion of the project were included in the positive termination category. Examples of positive terminations include: 1) entered another educational/training program, 2) transferred to another ABE program, 3) moved and indicated he/she would be enrolling in another program, 4) acquired 8th or 10th grade equivalency diploma, 5) acquired GED, 6) met personal fulfillment objectives. Examples of negative terminations include: 1) moved,

no indication he/she will be entering another ABE education/training program, 2) transportation problems, 3) childcare problems, 4) health problems, 5) unknown reasons.

Using a chi square test of independence, it was found that termination status differed significantly among the four groups represented by Table 4. $\chi^2 (3) = 63.69, P < .01$.

C. Group Counseling - Discussion

The counseling workshops were designed to increase: 1) self-awareness (interests, skills, values), 2) goal-setting and decision-making skills, 3) knowledge of and ability to utilize community resources, and 4) job-seeking skills. The counseling tools used in the workshops were also used in individual counseling sessions (Appendix B).

Three group counseling workshops were scheduled during the first three quarters of the project year. It had been projected that a minimum of 25 students would participate in the three workshops; however, only 12 students participated in the three nine-hour workshops. Because the project staff had the complete cooperation of the basic education program director and staff who assisted in recruitment of the students, the project staff believe the lack of attendance was due to: 1) the logistics of scheduling an activity outside of the "home" office, 2) the nature of the population to be served, 3) the individual needs of the adult students, and 4) the need to screen participants for the workshops.

The combination of scheduling an activity outside of the "home" office for a population that was transient in nature and who had outside demands on their time was an issue. In part, this could have been simplified had the workshops been scheduled for one day

rather than three days. However, in order for the student to achieve competency in each of the four areas described by Objective One, it was necessary to schedule the workshops for a minimum of nine hours. The hours were spread over three days due to the average attendance of the students. In addition, it was necessary for the student to attend each day of the workshop because each day's activities were dependent upon the previous day's activities resulting in the exclusion of several students from participation.

Finally, it was determined that a screening procedure was needed for selection of workshop participants. This was necessary in order that the workshops would be of the most benefit to the largest number of students. Past research has shown there are some apparent advantages and disadvantages of group counseling versus individual counseling. On the plus side, large numbers of individuals can be served in a group who might not have been served otherwise due to counselor shortage or lack of time. On the negative side, the counseling/instruction must be targeted toward the average student within the group in order for the workshop to be of the most benefit to the largest number of participants. Therefore, those above or below average students can not be served as effectively as those involved in individual counseling.

In order to serve the most students as effectively as possible, a set of criteria for selection of participants was recommended. This included: 1) participants must be able to understand verbal directions, 2) communicate/interact with group members, 3) be willing and able to attend all sessions, and 4) be interested in either getting a job or entering an educational/training program. In addition, it was recommended that students not participate if

they were suffering from any psychological problems or working with another counseling agency unless approved by that agency (e.g., CETA, Vocational Rehabilitation).

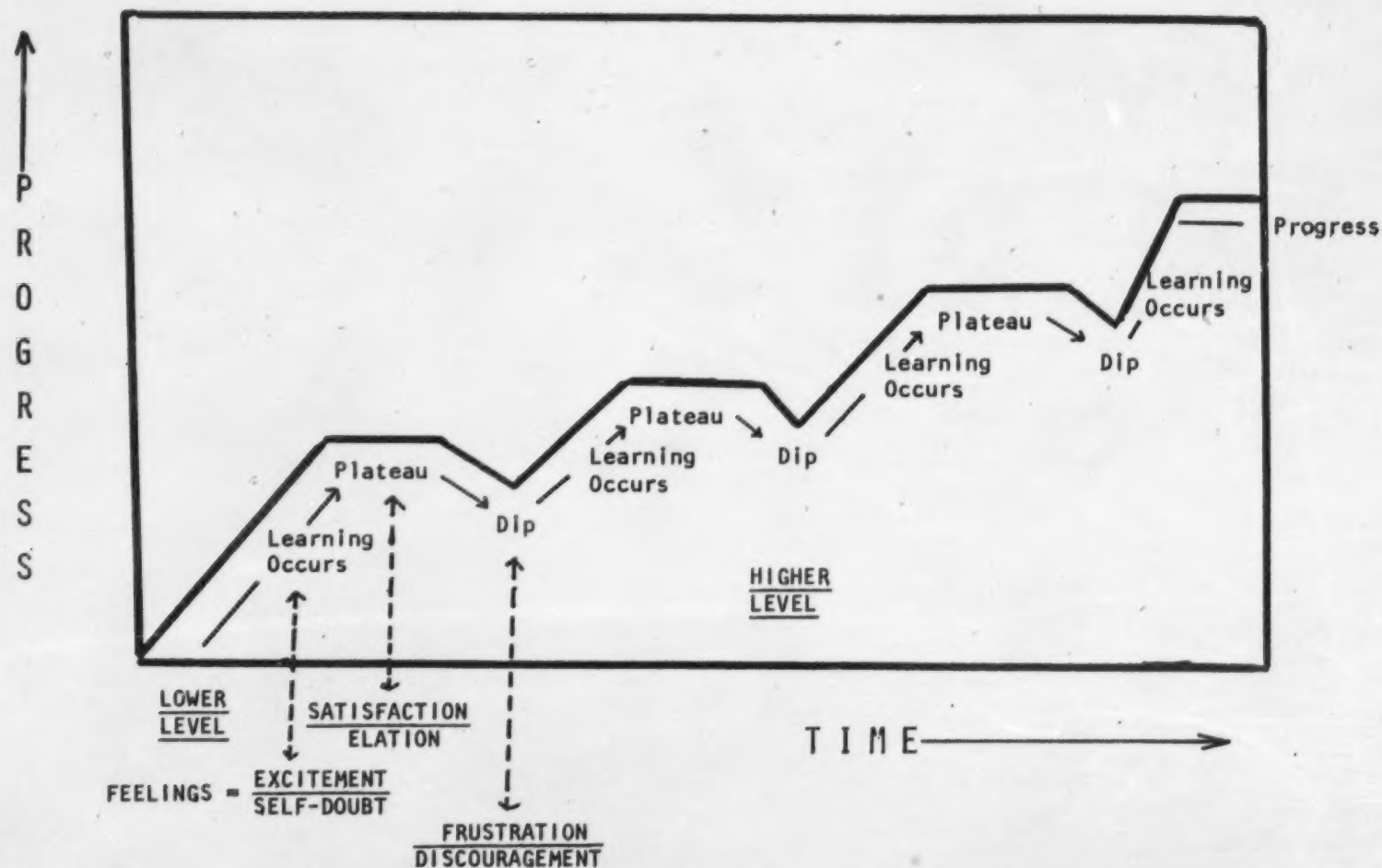
Because it was necessary to establish this Selection Criteria, several students were unable to participate in the workshops. In addition, it was necessary for a counselor to interview each student prior to the workshop in order to assess whether the student met the criteria for selection. In some cases the counselor spent additional time referring the student to other agencies for personal counseling or contacting agencies to obtain approval for the student's participation.

D. Individual Counseling Services - Discussion

The priority target population for this project was Level 1, Phase 1 (0-4th grade functional level) and Phase 2 (5-8th grade functional level) adult basic education students. It had been projected that individual counseling services would be offered to 40-80 students over a period of nine months. Counseling was made available to all Level 1 students; however, due to time constraints, only 33 students participated in the individual counseling project.

The following discussion focuses on observations made by the staff concerning: 1) how students learn (the learning experience), 2) the feelings accompanying the learning process, and 3) why students learn (motivation).

Diagram 1, on the following page, represents the learning process, or the way adults learn, and the feelings which accompany the adults' progress in the educational program. For example, as students entered the ABE program, they expressed excitement at



*This Diagram represents the observations of Project Search staff, and is not meant to illustrate learning theory research.

having decided to start something new as well as feelings of self-doubt about their chances of success in the program. After a period of time, these feelings were replaced by feelings of satisfaction for having remained in the educational program as well as elation over his/her progress and probable success. Finally, the students were confronted by a learning setback (dip) or plateau and consequently, experienced frustration and discouragement at the possibility of failure.

The target population of lower level students often experienced more intense feelings of confusion than the higher level students. In addition, they needed more time to reach their educational goals. It is possible that because of their lack of self-confidence and resiliency, they were more afraid of failing than the higher level students. This idea is illustrated by Diagram 1.

Through counseling, the lower level students gained insight into their feelings about learning as well as the manner in which they learned. Therefore, the students were less discouraged by the learning experience and developed a positive attitude towards their educational program.

On the other hand, the majority of higher level students seemed to have already come to terms with these feelings of frustration and self-doubt. In general, they had more feelings of self-esteem, perhaps because they could function better in society due to their higher reading and comprehension level, communication skills, and job-seeking skills. Therefore, they were prepared to focus on vocational concerns rather than personal problem-solving.

The preceding differences which were observed regarding lower functioning and higher functioning students are exemplified by

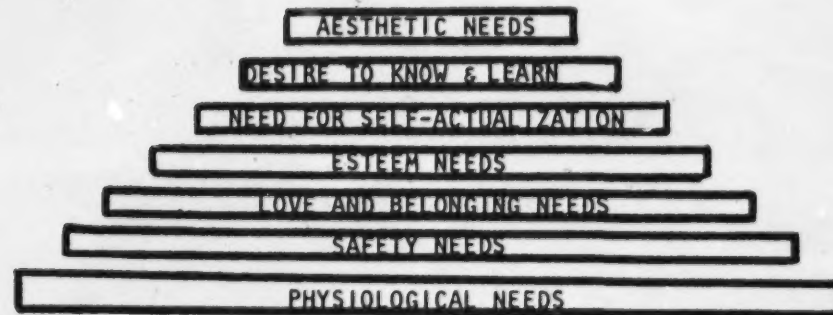
Maslow's hierarchy of needs.

According to Maslow, a renown psychologist, man has certain basic needs (survival, food, shelter) which must be satisfied before he can strive for the fulfillment of higher needs such as the desire to learn and know, or aesthetic needs as indicated by Diagram 2, shown on the following page.

The lower level students participating in Project SEARCH were usually at the lower end of this hierarchy and in most need of personal problem-solving to meet their physiological needs; those students functioning at a higher level seemed to be at a higher level of the hierarchy and more ready and able to benefit from vocational counseling and the learning experience.

DIAGRAM 2

MASLOW'S HIERARCHY OF NEEDS



Adapted from Maslow, A.H., "A Theory of Human Motivation," Psychological Review, 1943, Vol. 50, 370-396. Copyright 1943 by The American Psychological Association.

IV. CONCLUSION

As a result of Project SEARCH, it can be concluded that counseling services, both individual and group, are an effective means of increasing adult basic education students': 1) self-awareness (interests, skills, values), 2) decision-making and goal-setting skills, 3) knowledge and use of community resources, and 4) job-seeking skills.

Because of small samples, an analysis of data to determine which method of counseling was most effective was not feasible. However, project staff found individual counseling to be more efficient than group counseling in terms of counselors' time and number of students participating. This was due to the logistics of scheduling the group workshops outside of the "home" office, the characteristics of the population to be served (outside demands on time), and the need to screen participants. The project staff believe it is possible for group counseling to be both effective and efficient if the aforementioned problems can be anticipated and overcome. Therefore, further investigation into the effectiveness and efficiency of individual versus group counseling is suggested.

In addition to counseling having a positive impact on the adult students' effectiveness, counseling also had a positive impact on retention rates of the basic education program. Those students participating in Project SEARCH met their personal objectives or continued in the basic education program at a higher rate than those students not involved in counseling. Thus, ABE programs providing counseling services will have more students reaching their goals and less students terminating for negative reasons, resulting in improved retention rates.

Counseling also had a positive effect on the teaching staff in that the teachers were able to spend more time teaching rather than dealing

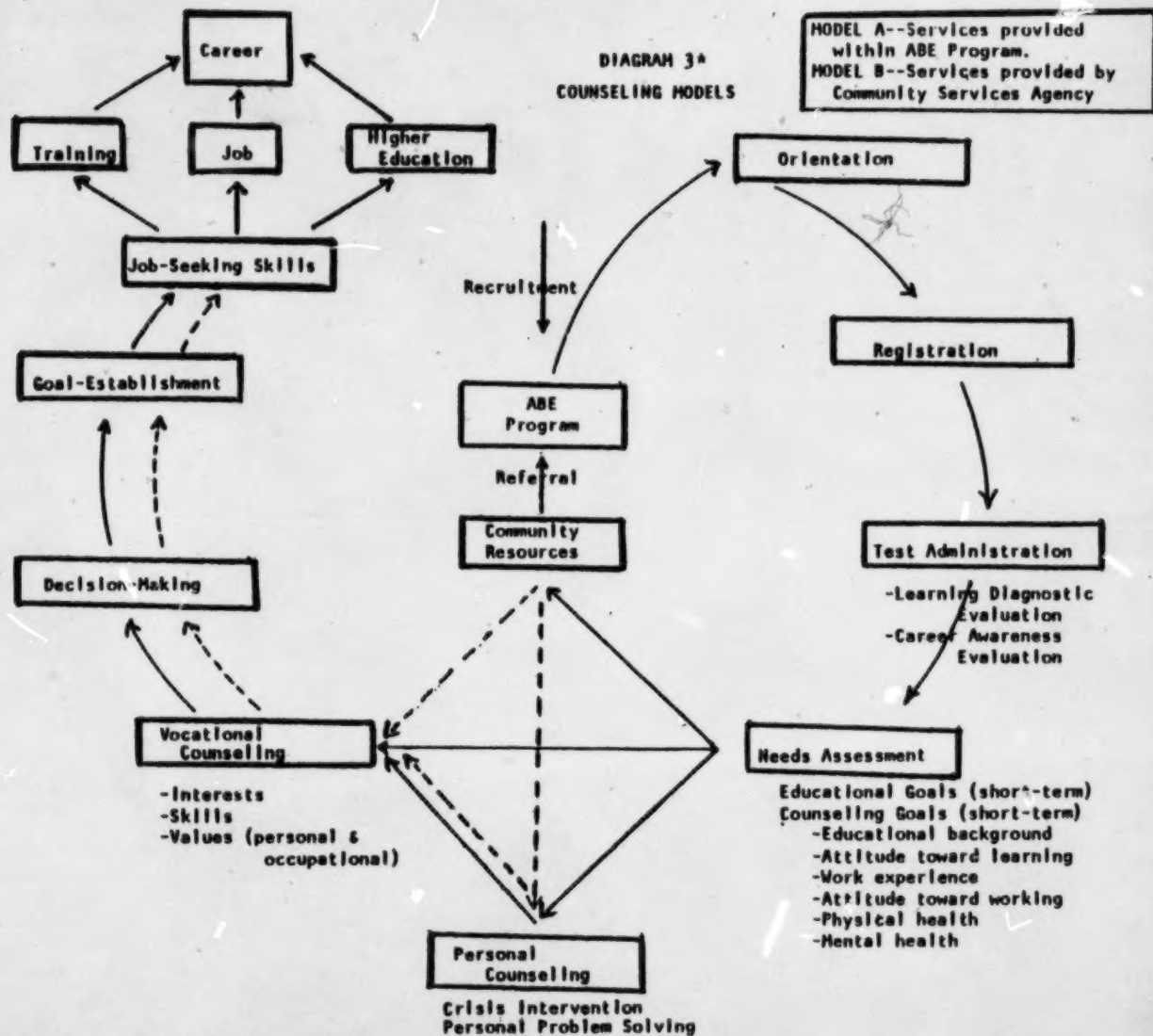
with students' personal and vocational problems in the classroom. More importantly, by working closely with the counselor, the teachers developed an increased awareness of how to identify students with problems and gained confidence in evaluating the services available for overcoming these problems.

Lastly, it was observed by project staff that lower level students, the target population, were in need of personal problem-solving counseling to meet their needs, while the higher level students were more ready for vocational counseling services. This is supported by Maslow's theory of motivation. He purports that man's lower needs must be satisfied before he can be concerned or concentrate on higher needs such as the desire to learn. Counseling assisted students in their growth through the lower stages of this hierarchy of needs, a prerequisite to learning.

Therefore, in order to meet the basic needs of the student, improve retention, and increase student effectiveness (decision-making, job-seeking skills, etc.), it is recommended that a combination of vocational and personal counseling services be made available to adults enrolled in basic education programs. Yet many adult educators maintain vocational and personal counseling services are peripheral to the mission of ABE. Paradoxically, the majority of adult educators consider the goal of ABE to be to enable students to function independently as adults. Results of Project SEARCH suggest students will only be prepared to function independently if their vocational, academic, and basic needs have been satisfied.

Perhaps it is not the mission of adult educators to provide counseling services. However, if the goal of ABE is to enable adults to function independently, then adult educators have a responsibility to assure that these counseling services are available to their students. The

students enrolling in adult education classes are not always aware of their needs and how to satisfy these needs. It is up to the adult educator to evaluate the student needs and either provide counseling services within the program to meet these needs or refer the student to a community service agency for assistance. The following diagram offers two models for providing counseling services within an ABE program. Model A represents the Needs Assessment, Personal Counseling and Vocational Counseling services being provided within the ABE program structure. Model B represents the Vocational and Personal Counseling services being provided by a community service agency. In both models, the ABE staff is responsible for performing the needs assessment.



*DEVELOPED BY PROJECT SEARCH STAFF

As a result of Project SEARCH, the following steps are recommended to adult educators wishing to improve retention and increase student effectiveness (personal problem-solving and vocational planning):

1. Evaluate needs of students through a comprehensive Needs Assessment (Diagram 3).
2. Provide vocational and personal counseling services
 - within ABE Program
 - refer to community service agencies
3. Provide teacher training in the areas of:
 - needs assessment
 - basic counseling skills
 - referral process
 - confidentiality (Because this area is extremely critical, there are laws governing the referral process and confidentiality. It is recommended that a local mental health agency be contacted for more information before implementing a counseling service.)
4. Strengthen and develop ties between community service agencies and ABE Programs.
5. Continue research designed to understand the needs of the ABE priority population.

In conclusion, Project SEARCH results suggest a cooperative effort between adult educators and counselors will maximize the overall growth and development of the adult learner.

APPENDIX A
EVALUATION TOOLS

Pre- Post-Test Information
Student Evaluation of Counseling Services



NED

NEW EDUCATIONAL DIRECTIONS, INC.

a nonprofit service organization

BOX 307 CRAWFORDSVILLE, INDIANA 47933 (317) 362-8877

The Development and Content of the New Instrument for Career Education

July, 1978

The nine scales of the New Instrument for Career Education (NICE) were developed specifically for the 1978 survey of the SPEDY programs in Indiana's Balance-of-State. The scales appear on two forms, as shown below:

Form A

- * Work-Related Attitudes
- * Sense (Locus) of Control
- * Job-Seeking Skills
- Job-Specific Occupational
Information

* The Pre- Post-Test consists of these six scales.

Form B

- * Self Esteem
- * Career Planning
- * Attitudes toward Learning
- General Occupational Information
- Sex Equity

Approach to Instrument Development

The test battery is based on the philosophy of career education expressed by the Office of Career Education, USOE, in publications such as *A Primer for Career Education* (Hoyt, 1977). Included in the *Primer* are nine learner outcome goals for career education. NED's "An Interpretation of USOE's Learner Outcome Goals for Career Education," (1978) divides these goals into subgoals and identifies some of the more specific behaviors, skills, attitudes, and knowledge units comprising each. The nine scales of NICE correspond to subgoals, not to the nine goals set forth by USOE.

The scales were designed to measure as many of the specific attributes defined by these subgoals as possible. The general approach to instrument development was one of wideband domain sampling and most of the domains are broad, consisting of a number of skills, attitudes, or facts which may not be closely related in the statistical sense. This means that the items in any given scale may appear quite different and the (statistical) internal consistency should be rather low. In contrast, the items on a narrowband instrument would appear more redundant and its measured internal consistency would be high.

The measures were designed to maximize content validity. That is, proposed items were scrutinized in terms of their apparent relevance to the domain, their potential sensitivity to instruction, and whether ambiguities were evident. Draft scales were examined according to how thoroughly the items covered the domain. Other considerations in instrument development were:

1. The need to minimize testing time while evaluating the SPEDY programs' effects on a number of youth outcomes.
2. The limited reading and writing skills of some youth, precluding questions requiring written responses and requiring that the amount and difficulty of the reading involved in taking the tests be minimized.
3. The 14-21 age range of SPEDY participants and the diversity of their educational and work backgrounds. This meant, for example, that test items could not assume that the respondent is in school, or that he or she has held a paying job before.

As discussed below, the Sense (Locus) of Control scale is a modification of a published and validated instrument. The other scales were developed by the NED staff, who relied heavily on items previously developed and used by NED in *Viewpoints on Work* and in the various versions and levels of the *Career Orientation Battery*.

Intended Uses of the Instruments

The instruments were designed as program evaluation tools. *Use of the results for individual diagnosis is strongly discouraged*, not only because the information about the measures' psychometric properties needed for meaningful interpretation of individual scores is not available, but also because the tests were not designed to provide information about narrowly-defined attributes needed for identifying an individual's specific strengths and weaknesses. However, the test scoring program includes a section indicating the percentage of the group who gave each response to each question. Program designers and instructors may find this useful in assessing the needs of their youth as a group.

Reading Level

The reading level of the scales was estimated with the Harris-Jacobson Readability Formula 2, which is based on the number of words per sentence and the frequency of uncommon words in the text. The levels ranged from low second grade (Self Esteem) to fourth grade (Sense of Control and Work-Related Attitudes). This estimate strikes us as rather low, but it does suggest that our goal of a reading level of sixth grade or lower was achieved. Since they were designed partially as vocabulary tests, the two occupational information scales were not subjected to this procedure.

Below is a description of each scale and the attributes it was designed to measure followed by a description of the test scoring program output.

Work-Related Attitudes

This scale consists of 32 statements with the response options of disagree, don't know, and agree. One point is awarded for a "don't know" response and two for the preferred answer (either disagree or agree), making the maximum possible score 64.

The items reflect attitudes which presumably underly good work habits. Specifically, the items address:

- * Desire to work
- * Desire to get along with others in the work setting
- * Acceptance of supervision and work regulations
- * Sense of responsibility to employer and co-workers
- * Dependability with respect to punctuality and regular attendance at work
- * Inclination to perform well without close supervision
- * Concern for quality work, desire to do her/his best
- * Desire to learn and to advance in a job

The Work-Related Attitudes scale is a modification of *Viewpoints on Work*, developed on the basis of employers' opinions of the worker traits, other than technical skills, associated with success in securing, maintaining, and advancing in a job. A draft version of VOW was reviewed by forty-five members of four advisory councils for vocational-technical education in Indiana and revised on the basis of their suggestions.

Sense (Locus) of Control

This 25-item scale is a modification of the 40-item Nowicki-Strickland Internal-External Scale (*Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*; 1973, Vol. 40, 148-154).

A high score suggests that the individual has a sense of control over her or his own destiny and environment and a low score suggests a sense of powerlessness a belief that the person is controlled largely by society, other individuals, chance, and fate. We would expect a person with a strong sense of control to be inclined to make career decisions, to take action toward implementing them, and to engage in other self-improvement activities because she or he would expect these efforts to pay off. A person with a weak sense of control, on the other hand, would be futilistic--less inclined to take action because he or she would have little reason to believe it would make a difference.

The modifications of the Nowicki-Strickland scale consisted primarily of eliminating items pertaining to the role of student or to family relationships, rewording several items about parents to make them applicable to employment settings, and changing outmoded or inappropriate words (such as "other children" to "other people"). The yes-no response scale was retained from Nowicki and Strickland's instrument.

Job-Seeking Skills

This 21-item scale measures knowledge about job-seeking. Eleven of the items concern employment interviews—their purpose, the importance of appropriate dress, and what to talk about during them. The other items address sources for locating potential employers, interpreting want ads, completing job applications, and the desirability of following up on initial contacts with potential employers.

The response options for all but one of the items are true, false, and don't know. Credit is given only for the correct response (either true or false); the "don't know" option was included only to minimize guessing.

Self Esteem

The self esteem scale consists of 22 statements with four response options from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Three points are awarded for the preferred response (either strongly agree or strongly disagree) and 2, 1, or 0 points for the others.

The scale is designed to measure the degree to which the individual perceives him/herself as a valuable person. Individuals with high scores describe themselves as competent, confident, and worthy of high regard from themselves and others. They report believing that their strengths outweigh their weaknesses and that their futures are promising.

Career Planning

This scale is based on a model which views the components of career decision-making as:

1. Attitudinal preparation to make a decision.
2. Self appraisal of interests, values, aptitudes, skills.
3. Search of information about career options.
4. Evaluation of various career options against personal preferences and characteristics, placing the greatest weight on factors of highest personal importance.
5. Tentative career choice.

These components are not necessarily consecutive processes and are often simultaneous. Also, the model is a closed system; the cycle may be repeated a number of times throughout a lifetime both before and after the individual begins educational preparation for a career or enters the labor market.

The scale's 44 items address the following:

- * Recognition of the importance of one's career in his/her life (4 items)
- * Recognition that a variety of career options are available (3 items)
- * Appreciation of the value of career planning (6 items)
- * Appreciation of the importance of taking personal responsibility for career decisions and confidence in own ability to make sound decisions (4 items)
- * Awareness of self-appraisal and career information-seeking techniques (3 items)
- * Involvement in self-appraisal, career information-seeking, and career option evaluation (14 items)
- * Inclination to consider long-term impact of immediate career decisions (3 items)
- * Recognition of (relatively) irrelevant or short-sighted criteria used by some in evaluating career options (5 items)
- * Belief in the reversibility of prior career decisions (2 items)

Thirty-eight of the scale's 44 items employ three-point response scales where two points are awarded for the preferred response and one for the neutral response. The remaining six items have only one correct response, for which two points are awarded.

Attitudes toward Learning

This scale consists of 21 statements with the response options of agree, disagree, and no opinion; one point is awarded for "no opinion" and two for the preferred response.

Unlike most tests of this type, the Attitudes toward Learning scale is not concerned with how much the individual likes school or feels comfortable in the student role. Six items address perceived relevance of school learning. The remaining items deal with attitudes toward learning in general (7 items), keeping abreast with current events (2 items), and learning in the employment setting (6 items).

STUDENT EVALUATION OF COUNSELING SERVICE

Directions: Please place an X on the scale at the point that best shows how you feel.

- 1.(a) Before participating in vocational counseling, did you feel you were aware of your skills?

5	4	3	2	1
no, not at all		somewhat	yes, very aware	

- 1.(b) As a result of counseling, do you feel you are aware of your skills now?

5	4	3	2	1
no, not at all		somewhat	yes, very aware	

- 2.(a) Had you set any short or long term career goals before entering counseling?

5	4	3	2	1
no, not at all		had begun to plan and set career goals	yes, have set goals	

- 2.(b) As a result of counseling, have you set any short or long term career goals?

5	4	3	2	1
no, not at all		have begun to plan and set career goals	yes, have set goals	

- 3.(a) Before counseling were you aware of how to make decisions?

5	4	3	2	1
no, not at all		somewhat	yes, very aware	

- 3.(b) As a result of counseling, do you feel you are now aware of how to make decisions?

5	4	3	2	1
no, not at all		somewhat	yes, very aware	

- 4.(a) Before entering counseling, were you able to locate and use community agencies,

5	4	3	2	1
no, not at all		could locate some agencies	yes, could locate and use agencies	

4.(b) As a result of counseling, are you now able to locate and use community agencies?

5	4	3	2	1
no, not at all		can locate some agencies		yes, can locate <u>and use agencies</u>

5.(a) Before counseling did you feel your job seeking skills were adequate?

5	4	3	2	1
no, not at all		somewhat adequate	yes, very adequate	

5.(b) As a result of counseling, do you feel your job seeking skills are now adequate?

5	4	3	2	1
no, not at all		somewhat adequate	very adequate	

6. How would you rate the value of this vocational counseling experience?

5	4	3	2	1
failed to meet my needs		somewhat helpful	very valuable to me	

We are interested in improving this counseling service in order that it will meet more of your needs. Please feel free to make any comments you have about your counseling experience. For example, what did you like the most (or least) about being involved in counseling?

Comments:

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire!

APPENDIX B
COUNSELING TOOLS

Needs Assessment

Goal Attainment Profile

Student/Counselor Contact Sheet

Agreement

"Self-Directed Search" Interest Inventory

NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Appendix B

Date _____

Student Number _____

Name _____

Age _____

Level _____

Work History (present to past, include volunteer work and periods of unemployment)

School History (favorite subjects, interests, why he/she left school, etc.)

Past Medical History (any problems? How resolved? Medication?)

Vocational and Other Test Results; Tests to be Administered

Have you ever had personal or vocational counseling? If so, for what reason?
(attitude toward counseling experience?)

Needs Assessment - continued

Any legal problems? (on probation now?)

What do you hop to gain from these vocational counseling sessions?

Present living situation (describe)

Any problems that might prevent your continued participation in ABE or counseling?

How can these problems be handled?

GOAL ATTAINMENT PROFILE

	SCALE A	SCALE B	SCALE C	SCALE D
5 Best Expected Success	Continues to strive for self awareness; able to reevaluate skills, interests, values; always able to relate these to career decision-making process.	All of the below, in addition has taken steps to reach present goals and begun to establish new goals based upon decision making theory.	Has located/utilized community services in more than 1 area; is benefiting from them in terms of increased options (voc. &/r pers.)	All of the below, in addition actively seeks employment, i.e. sends resume to company and asks for interviews.
4 Better than Expected Level of Outcome	Very aware of self; able to identify many skills, values, interests and relate these to the career decision-making process.	Effectively uses the decision-making process; firmly established realistic short and long term goals.	Has located/utilized community services in more than 1 area.	Can fill out job application fully and accurately; good interviewing skills, appearance; aware and can use employment resources, i.e. want ads, contacts.
3 Expected Level of Outcome	Some awareness of self: skills, interests, values; usually able to relate these to the career decision-making process.	Effectively uses the decision-making process; tentatively established short and long term goals.	Is able to locate/ utilize community services providing job/ed. and or counseling info. and services.	Can fill out job application; has basic interview skills, adequate appearance, is aware of normal job placement agencies and of how to use them.
2 Less than Expected Level of Success	Sees need to become aware of self; not yet able to identify skills, interests, values or relate these to the career decision-making process.	Sees need to plan; not yet aware of decision-making process; no goals established.	Is aware that community services exist, but does not know how to locate or utilize their services.	Fills out application inadequately, some interviewing skills; appearance poor; aware of some job placement agencies (not how to use them).
1 Most Unfavorable Level	Lacks self-awareness; makes no attempt to identify skills, interests, values or relate these to the career decision-making process.	Indifferent to planning; no attempt to establish short or long term goals.	Is unaware of community services and the benefit they could be.	Can not fill out a job application, interview skills very poor, appearance poor, unaware of job placement agencies.

SELF-AWARENESS

GOAL ESTABLISHMENT

COMMUNITY SERVICES

JOB SEEKING SKILLS

GOAL ATTAINMENT PROFILE

Date:

Student Number: _____

Name:

Phone: _____

Age:

Estimated time needed
to complete ABE/GED:

STUDENT/COUNSELOR CONTACT SHEET

Goal (s) for today:

Objective(s) for today:

Counseling tools to be employed:

Resources:

*Vocational information requested:

*Referrals made:

*Unit completed:

Brief description of session (including discussion of problems, progress, changes in student counseling plan, etc.):

Date of next session:

Goal(s) and objective(s) for next session:

AGREEMENT

GOAL _____

I will take the following steps to reach my goal:

Completion date	1.	_____
_____		_____
	2.	_____
_____		_____
	3.	_____
_____		_____
	4.	_____
_____		_____

Tentative Schedule

Day	Time
_____	_____

I agree to be on time to my counseling sessions, call my counselor () if I will be late, and complete all assignments necessary to reach the goal that my counselor and I have decided upon.

_____ CLIENT

_____ COUNSELOR

_____ DATE

SELF-DIRECTED SEARCH INTEREST INVENTORY

The Self-Directed Search (SDS) is a self-administered, self-scored, and self-interpreted vocational counseling tool. The SDS includes two booklets, an assessment booklet and an occupational classification booklet.

To use the SDS, a person merely fills out the assessment booklet and obtains a three-letter occupational code. He then uses the code to locate suitable occupations in the occupational classification booklet, The Occupations Finder. In short, the SDS provides a vocational counseling experience by simulating what a person and his counselor might do in several interviews. Most people complete the SDS in 40 to 60 minutes.

The typical person's experience is taking a traditional psychological test is characterized by ambiguity (he doesn't clearly know what is going on), dependency (he is a passive participant), and delay (he must wait for results). The taking of the Self-Directed Search (SDS) is a different experience. When a person takes the SDS, he knows what is being assessed, he participates in his own scoring, profiling, and interpretation, and he obtains the results of his self-assessment experience immediately.

The SDS has the following desirable characteristics:

Effects. The SDS has been shown to increase students' satisfaction with their current occupational aspiration, and to cause students to consider more occupational alternatives. Counselors report that SDS takers show more initiative in resolving their vocational decisions and that they understand the theory of the SDS--especially the translation of their characteristics into occupational terms. In general, people of all ages enjoy the experience.

Self-Direction. Because the SDS is always controlled by its user, the learning experience cannot be marred by occasional and unavoidable conflicts with test administrators, teachers, or counselors. The SDS can be used when the person wants to use it, and he can take it in private. In a sense, using the SDS is like undergoing a successful programmed learning experience.

Simplicity. Answer sheets, proctors, test dates, scoring services, elaborate reports, keys, and norms have been replaced by a single pair of booklets in which a person's interests, activities, competencies, and self-estimates are integrated in the form of a three-letter code which is easily understood and allows for the complexity of personality. The language of the SDS is at an easy reading level, and the scoring, graphing, and computational tasks are also readily comprehensible. The SDS is appropriate for use with people aged 15 or above.

Comprehensive Exploration. The SDS provides an exploration of the entire range of occupational possibilities. A person can study the relationships between his personal characteristics, and the 456 occupations in the Occupations Finder, which comprise more than 95 percent of the labor force. Using a simple table, he can also explore all occupations in the Dictionary of Occupational Titles.

Personal Development. Because of its desirable characteristics, the SDS lends itself to repeated use. Such a periodic stock-taking is consistent with a developmental conception of vocational counseling.

Scientific Base. The SDS is an outgrowth of a theory of vocational choice (Holland, 1959, 1966b, 1972), which has undergone extensive investigation. The entire SDS has been oriented by that theory of personality types and environmental models. The personal assessment and the occupational classification both use the six major concepts in the theory and the hexagonal arrangement of those concepts discovered earlier.

Safeguards. The SDS contains four major safeguards to prevent errors or destructive outcomes. (1) A person's resemblance to each of the six types of the personal assessment is determined five times, not once. (2) The personal assessment is used in a conservative fashion. (A person searches for all permutations of his three-letter summary code, not just one permutation.) (3) A person compares his summary code with the codes of his occupational daydreams. He is instructed to seek help if his summary code and daydream codes do not agree. (4) The user is also referred to a counselor for more information or for other kinds of help.

VOCATIONAL EXPLORATION AND GUIDANCE

The SDS may be used for individual or group vocational counseling. In individual counseling, the SDS can be given to take home after a brief interview. In group counseling, the SDS can be used as a programmed experience. Students and adults enjoy discussing what the SDS means; they quickly learn the classification scheme; they contribute information about their lives; and they often take a positive stance toward the resolution of their vocational possibilities.

The SDS helps people with a wide range of vocational questions: students who wonder what career to follow; students who want to support a tentative choice or to make sure that they have not overlooked obvious alternatives; and adults seeking a second career, returning to school, or doubting the suitability of their current jobs.